

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph at page 17, line 23 to page 18, line 23, as follows:

The backboard collar 21 comprises a backboard 21a covering the rear surface of the rotating portion of the impeller 3 and a collar 21b disposed in coaxial with the rotating shaft 6 and in non-contact therewith. The backboard 21a and the collar 21b are jointed each other by means of socket and spigot joint or the like and a centering device (not shown) so that they can be thermally expanded while their common center can be maintained. The backboard 21a forms the flow path of hot gas inside the hot-gas blowing fan in association with the scroll 1. As the material for the heat insulating layer 16, ceramic fibers or the like are used. On the other hand, the backboard collar 21 prevents ceramics fibers from scattering into the flow path of hot gas. As shown in Figure 1, there is no seal positioned between the impeller 3 and the bearing 7 to prevent gas in the hot flow path from traveling from the impeller 3 to the bearing 7. The backboard collar 21 is fixed to the cooling portion 5 by interposing the heat insulating spacer 22 therebetween. The backboard 21a contacts directly the hot gas whereby it has the same temperature level as the hot gas. The collar 21b is formed integrally with the backboard 21a and the presence of the heat insulating spacer 22 between the collar 21b and the cooling portion 5 blocks the cooling effect from the cooling portion 5. Accordingly, the collar 21b has a temperature level near the temperature of the backboard 21a. Thus, the thermal deformation due to a temperature difference between the backboard 21a and the collar 21b can be prevented and at the same time, the thermal loss of the fuel cell system can be reduced.